The Met Office and the UK's resilience to flooding

6 March 2013 - We have always seen a great deal of variability in UK rainfall because our weather patterns are constantly changing. This was particularly evident last year when we moved from drought to flood. Ensuring resilience to civil emergencies and natural hazards is therefore an important issue.

Rob Varley, Operations and Services Director at the Met Office, will be speaking at the Building the Nation's Resilience to Flooding conference on the importance of improving not only local resilience to flooding, but also developing a more robust general contingency and emergency planning framework.

Rob Varley said: "With science at the heart of all our services, the Met Office is a trusted partner for climate, weather and hazard services providing advice and operational response and support. "Our weather and hazard management services help improve the resilience and effectiveness of public services helping to save lives, protect property and support the national economy."

Through working in partnership with science and service based organisations, the Met Office continues to invest in its own science and the services it provides. For flooding resilience, the partnership with the Environment Agency and Scottish Environment Protection Agency helped develop the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) in 2009 and Scottish Flood Forecasting Service (SFFS) in 2011.

The FFC and SFFS help to warn against all sources of flooding, delivering efficient, holistic flood forecasting guidance and information to emergency responders across England and Wales. They were also the first operational hydrometeorology units in the UK and have become a world leader with other countries who learn from the centres.

In terms of resilience, the key benefits to emergency responders and local authorities are:

- Early and ongoing assessment of weather and impacts of flood risk.
- Longer lead times for emergency responders driven by higher resolution and ensemble forecasts.
- The provision of intelligence on flood duration to aid recovery.

For further information about how the Met Office is ensuring resilience to flooding for the future you can visit our flood forecasting web page.

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Last updated: 18 March 2013